TABLE 1.—*Comparison of observed and computed pressures at upper levels.*

| Station. | Date. | Surface. | | Pressure aloft. | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | 1-km. level. | | | 2-km. level. | | |
| | | Wind dir. | Pressure. | Obsd. | Cmptd. | Diff. | Obsd. | Cmptd. | Diff. |
| | 1921. | | *mb.* | *mb.* | *mb.* | *mb.* | *mb.* | *mb.* | *mb.* |
| Groesbeck, Tex. | Jan. 13 | NW | 1,000.7 | 898.9 | 899.0 | 0.1 | 794.1 | 792.7 | −1.4 |
| | Jan. 21 | SE | 1,007.7 | 910.4 | 911.3 | 0.9 | 808.3 | 810.1 | 1.8 |
| | Feb. 10 | NW | 998.9 | 899.6 | 899.5 | −0.1 | 795.4 | 795.1 | −0.3 |
| | Feb. 18 | E | 1,005.2 | 905.1 | 904.6 | −0.5 | 800.9 | 800.1 | −0.8 |
| Broken Arrow, Okla. | Jan. 1 | W | 985.3 | 896.5 | 896.2 | −0.3 | 792.5 | 791.9 | −0.6 |
| | Jan. 27 | S | 999.9 | 907.7 | 908.9 | 1.2 | 803.9 | 801.2 | −2.7 |
| | Feb. 10 | NW | 985.4 | 896.0 | 895.7 | −0.3 | 791.7 | 791.9 | 0.2 |
| | Feb. 21 | S | 989.8 | 899.1 | 898.9 | −0.2 | 793.1 | 792.1 | −1.0 |
| Ellendale, N. Dak. | Jan. 8 | W | 970.6 | 901.8 | 902.8 | 1.0 | 792.1 | 794.1 | 2.0 |
| | Jan. 24 | NE | 978.0 | 909.6 | 909.7 | 0.1 | 800.5 | 799.4 | −1.1 |
| | Feb. 8 | SW | 956.5 | 891.0 | 890.0 | −1.0 | 784.9 | 780.2 | −4.7 |
| | Feb. 27 | SW | 956.5 | 893.0 | 891.4 | −1.6 | 789.6 | 786.4 | −3.2 |
| Drexel, Nebr. | Jan. 2 | SW | 962.1 | 892.2 | 891.9 | −0.3 | 787.4 | 787.2 | −0.2 |
| | Jan. 7 | N | 968.9 | 898.4 | 898.4 | 0.0 | 792.1 | 793.7 | 1.6 |
| | Feb. 7 | N | 977.3 | 904.1 | 902.7 | −1.4 | 794.2 | 792.3 | −1.9 |
| | Feb. 14 | E | 973.3 | 904.4 | 903.1 | −1.3 | 802.1 | 802.1 | 0.0 |
| Royal Center, Ind. | Jan. 5 | NW | 990.6 | 898.0 | 898.7 | 0.7 | 792.0 | 792.5 | 0.5 |
| | Jan. 6 | SE | 998.3 | 906.6 | 906.5 | −0.1 | 802.3 | 800.8 | 1.5 |
| | Feb. 2 | SW | 991.7 | 899.3 | 899.5 | 0.2 | 790.0 | 792.1 | 2.1 |
| | Feb. 14 | NE | 994.2 | 904.1 | 903.5 | −0.6 | 800.2 | 799.1 | −1.1 |
| Mean difference | | | | | | 0.5 | | | 1.4 |

As a test of the method, 20 comparisons were made for each of the two levels at each of the active kite stations (see Table 1), and it was found that, for the 1-kilometer level, the differences between computed and observed [3] values were 1 mb. or less in 16 cases, the remaining 4 not exceeding 1.6 mb. For the 2-kilometer level, where, of course, larger discrepancies were to be expected as a result of the long reduction column, 8 cases gave differences of 1 mb. or less; 16 were below 2 mb.; 18 were below 3 mb.; and the remaining 2 were 3.2 and 4.7 mb., respectively. The mean difference was 0.5 mb. for the 1-kilometer level and 1.4 mb. for the 2-kilometer level. A further careful discussion of the results and some trial upper-air maps will be made. The work seems to hold promise of being of considerable value to aviation, and it is hoped will be of subsequent value in attacking the problem of Plateau barometry.

## METEOROLOGY IN THE SERVICE OF AVIATION.

By G. DOBSON.

[Abstracted from *Aeronautics*, Feb. 17, 1921, pp. 113-116; published in greater detail in *The Aeronautical Journal*, May, 1921, pp. 223-236.]

The well-known problems confronting the aeronautical meteorologist are discussed with special reference to England. The information most needed is, first, with respect to the variation of speed and direction of wind with height; second, the heights of cloud bases and the thickness of the layers; third, warnings in case clouds come so near the surface as to make landings dangerous; and, fourth, the nature of the weather likely to be encountered along the route, with special attention to squalls or other local disturbances. After discussing the various means of obtaining these data, the author inclines to the belief that the best results will come from locating meteorological stations along the routes, and having these stations report their weather and upper-air data obtained from frequent kite-balloon ascensions, assuming the conditions between observations to remain the same as at observation. He admits, of course, the value of widespread aerological stations, but rules them out for financial reasons. The danger of having kite-balloon cables in the air near flying routes is disposed of by having the meteorological stations as much as 30 to 50 miles either side of the route. Communication from these stations should be by wireless.

The methods of dispersing fog over small areas, namely, heating, blowing powdered calcium chloride into the air, and electrical discharge, are discussed and negative conclusions drawn. Heating the air with coal heaters would not yield sufficient heat and would add nuclei of condensation to the air. Spraying powdered calcium chloride into the air would tend to collect the water out of the air about the particles until they would be so heavy as to fall. This would require great quantities of the powder, but would give the greatest promise of any of the methods. The method of dispersing fog in the laboratory by means of the brush discharge would have an inconsiderable effect in the open air. Moreover, if any method for dispersing or precipitating fog were practicable, the quantity of water which would result would be considerable.

The author concludes his paper by the expression of mild pessimism regarding the ability of the meteorologist at present to give the aviator just what he wants, although the importance of meteorology in aviation is denied by none.

The paper was discussed by Col. Gold, Maj. Gen. W. S. Brancker, Col. W. D. Beatty, and Maj. H. G. Brackley. The trend of opinion among those who talked was that too little importance had been attached to the value of forecasts and too much to the assumption that frequent observations along a single route would be satisfactory. The distance of 30 to 50 miles from observing station to the route would be too great, but to put kite balloons closer would be dangerous for airplanes flying in that vicinity. Pilots want a concise statement before they start, and should be instructed to report conditions encountered in flight.—*C. L. M.*

## BRITISH AND FRENCH RADIO WEATHER SERVICE FOR AVIATORS.

(Reprinted from *Science*, Sept. 17, 1920, p. 271.)

The Air Ministry, in an official notice to airmen, according to the London *Times*, details innovations recently introduced in the dissemination of meteorological statistics and forecasts by wireless telegraphy for the use of aircraft. Reports are issued from the Croydon aerodrome on a 900-meter continuous wave each day, including Sundays, at hourly intervals between 7:35 a. m. (G. M. T.) and 4:35 p. m., the data in each consisting of observations made 35 minutes previously at the following places: Felixstowe, Croydon, Biggin Hill, Lympne, Beachy Head, Dungeness, and Botley Hill (North Downs). In addition to the usual information, the messages now include the direction and speed of the low cloud, the character of the sea swell, and the visibility toward the sea is distinguished from that over the land, the latter important feature being observed at various points along the channel coast. A statement is also added regarding the conditions prevailing on the North Downs as viewed from Biggin Hill, while at 8:25 a. m.

[3] While no study of the accuracy of the observed pressures has been made, it has been estimated that it does not exceed 1 mb. The probable variation of the *computed* pressures, as determined by a statistical study of the data, is about 0.5 mb. for the 1-km. level, and 1.3 mb. for the 2-km. level, values which are in close agreement with the mean difference of the 20 random cases selected above. While 20 cases are too few to base generalizations upon, it would seem that the close agreement between the probable variation of a single value of computed pressure and the mean difference between observed and computed pressure would indicate that the probable error of a single observation of pressure is less than 1 mb., as estimated above. A study of a large number of computed and observed pressures might afford an indirect, but reliable, means of determining the probable error of pressure observations by the meteorograph.